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vents plants from gaining a foot-hold on the eastern shores where the lakes are of considerable size.

6. The flora of the moor has among its species some of the rarest plants of the region.
7. A considerable number of species otherwise confined to the Atlantic coast occur here. It does not follow, as Paine asserts (l. c., p. 92), that a maritime bay occupied this depression.
8. The distribution of moor-loving plants suggests that once conditions of humidity and temperature enabled them to grow very much more abundantly than now.
9. The commercial value of the moss bids fair to devastate the moors, and their recovery will, of necessity, be very slow.

EDITOR'S TABLE.

With the present number the AMERICAN NATURALIST comes into the possession of new proprietors and under the charge of new editors. We do not propose to make promises of improvement; but shall leave the journal to speak for itself upon that score. We do think it due to our readers, however, to state our convictions as to the position the NATURALIST should occupy in the future.

As we see it, there are, under existing conditions in science, only three kinds of scientific serials that can hope to prosper. There is, on the one extreme, the technical journal devoted to a single strictly defined subject and intended as a repertory of the results of research. At the other extreme is the popular scientific journal which seeks to interest and instruct those who are without specific scientific training. Lastly, between these extremes, comes the general scientific journal which holds a distinct position; it is intended for the students and workers in science—a constituency which has already attained considerable size in this country and is rapidly growing. The NATURALIST aims at being such a journal with such a constituency.

The objection may be made, however, that this constituency is an ill defined one and is without common needs. There are two answers to this objection; the *á priori* answer and that of experience. The *á priori* answer is that, despite the fact that science is becoming more differentiated, its separate disciplines are expanding and coming to overlap. Especially is this true of the natural sciences. The fusion of the biological sciences is wellnigh complete ; and they, in turn, grade into geology through geographical distribution and physical geography on the one hand, and through palæontology on the other. All of the natural sciences, moreover, must seek for their bases within the realms of chemistry and physics. Indeed in the development of the new fields of biological geology, chemical geology, bio-chemistry, and bio-physics we can foresee the clearer and more general recognition of the solidarity of the sciences.

The answer of experience is not less decisive. No one can doubt that journals of that class in which *Nature, Science, La revue scientifique,* and *Naturwissenschaftliche Rundschau* are notable examples, meet a perfectly well defined need, and their prosperity gives us hope for success. We accept the answers *á priori* and *á posteriori* and fear no lack of a constituency.

One other point. Every scientific man, as such, may well read two general scientific journals, the weekly scientific newspaper and the monthly review of scientific progress. We recognize that the first of these is already admirably supplied in this country ; we believe that THE AMERICAN NATURALIST should furnish the second.

Certain matters of detail are determined by the proposed position of the NATURALIST. We cannot publish very technical works but shall welcome such results of research upon the broader problems of the sciences as may be expected to interest a large share of our readers. For example, it would be inconsistent with our plan to publish a minute description of some anatomical feature or a mere list of the species found in some region; unless, in the first case, the subject should appear to have broad morphological or physiological bearings, or, in the second case, owing to the interesting character of the types or some peculiarity of their distribution, the list should be shown to have exceptional value. On the other hand, papers intended for beginners, such as, "Some birds of the garden," "Some common weeds," are not appropriate for this journal. What we desire is scientific papers written by scientific persons and of interest to scientific workers in more than one field. In addition to results of research, we shall look for summaries of progress in natural science, discussion of scientific questions of the day, and reviews of books and the more important papers. Remembering our title, while not forgetting that science is cosmoplitan, we shall seek especially the advancement of natural science in America.

Such, then, is our programme. To carry it out we invite the coöperation of every American naturalist.

It was a very natural thing that Delage, after going over the ground that he did in the preparation of his great work on "Les grands problèmes de la biologie générale" should see the need of frequently gathering together and classifying the widely scattered data belonging to this field; and thus came into existence the new annual, *L'Année Biologique*, whose first number lies before us.

Its scope is very broad. There are twenty general subjects treated in twenty chapters. These subjects are: 1, the cell; 2, the sexual products and fecondation; 3, parthenogenesis; 4, asexual reproduction; 5, ontogenesis; 6, teratogenesis; 7, regeneration; 8, grafting; 9, sex and secondary sexual characters; 10, polymorphism, metamorphosis, and alternation of generations; 11, latent characters; 12, correlation; 13, death, immortality, and the germ-plasm; 14, general morphology and physiology; 15, heredity; 16, variation; 17, the origin of species, phylogeny; 18, the geographic distribution of species; 19, mental functions; 20, general theories–generalities.

The organization of the journal is as follows: Professor Delage is the director of the serial, Dr. Georges Poirault is secretary of the "Redaction," and there is a committee of fifty-three compilers who review papers. This committee is an international one, consisting of forty-four Frenchmen, three Belgians, three Englishmen, one Russian, one Swiss, and one American. In addition to reviews of individual papers, some of these compilers have furnished summaries of progress in a subject. With the reviews of any chapter in their hands, the director and secretary have made a summary, exhibiting in a few pages the salient points of progress made during the year in the subject under consideration. This summary precedes the reviews in each chapter, so that the reader may first quickly read the accounts of progress in the different subjects and then look up the more detailed reviews of any particular papers. Finally, there is a "Table analytique" in which are references to about 2500 subjects, groups, and authors; e. g., Heliotropisme, Helix, Helmholtz. Altogether much good judgment has been exercised in the arrangement of the contents of the annual and in making cross references so that the work shall be most serviceable to the student.

As for the reviews themselves, they are in general *reviews* and not *abstracts*, in which respect they quite throw in the shade the contents of the usual "Berichte." Most of them are, of course, less than a page long but important works command much more space. Thus the review of Roux's "Gesammelte Abhandlungen" occupies 13 pages; of Tornier's "Entstehung der Gelenkformen" 7½ pages: of Verworn's

"Allgemeine Physiologie" 10 pages; of Lloyd Morgan's "Definitions of Instinct" 7½ pages (complete translation); of Baldwin's "Mental Development" 8 pages; of Coutagne's "Polymorphisme des Mollusques" (by the author) 6 pages. Many of the reviews are accompanied by valuable critical comments and some of them are illustrated by simple figures.

The summaries of progress and comprehensive reviews are very valuable. Some of these are: Influence of stock on graft, by Daniel; Experimental data upon functional correlation in animals, by Gley; On polyzoism and on the integrating organologic unity in Vertebrates, by Durrand; The defences of the organism in the presence of virus (33 pages), by Charrin; The soluable ferments, by Bourquelot; Comparative study of microbic toxines and of venin, by Phisalix; The modern conception of the structure of the nervous system (25 pages, 7 figures) by Mlle. Szczawinska; Modern psychology and its recent progress (28 pages), by Binet; Note on the theory of plasomes, by Wiesner, with response by Delage; On the phenomena of reproduction, by Hartog. These summaries touch a large proportion of the biological subjects whose advance characterized the year 1895.

Without going at all into the subject matter of this number, which will be considered elsewhere, this much may be said: The appearance of *L'Année biologique* with its classification, analysis, and synthesis of a vast array of facts, many of which find elsewhere no reception, is doing an important work in bringing general biology into recognition as a science coördinate with, although overlapping, morphology and physiology.

There is an important omission, it seems to us, in the list of over 500 periodicals consulted by the editors of *L'Année Biologique.* This omission is of a class of journals which are on the borderline of the scientific but yet contain important biological data. To this class belong the journals devoted to agriculture, horticulture, breeding veterinary medicine, surgery and medicine. From such journals Darwin obtained many of his most important facts. We open his "Variation of Animals and Plants" at random and quote some of his references; Gardiner's Chronical, Encyclopedia of Rural Sports, Horticultural Transactions, Journal of Horticulture, Journal of the Roy. Horticult. Soc., British and Foreign Medico-Chirurg. Review, Jour. of Agricult. of Highland Soc., Landwirthschaft. Wochenblatt, Jour. del'Acad. Hort. de Gand. Interspersed with such as these there are, of course, references to the more scientific journals. There is no question, however, but that now, as in Darwin's time, many most valuable data are to be gleaned from such serials as are enumerated above. It would be well if the new annual could undertake this work also.

We welcome the news that America is at last to have a representative Journal of Physiology; and it is especially gratifying that it is to embrace all fields of physiology, including bio-chemistry, physiological morphology and the physiology of invertebrates. The Journal will be edited by a representative Committee of the American Physiological Society, and will be under the immediate charge of Dr. W. T. Porter of the Harvard Medical School. The price has been set at five dollars per volume of about five hundred pages. The editors modestly suggest that not more than one volume a year will be necessary; we, however, confidently expect that in a few years the American Journal of Physiology will be rolling up as many volumes a year as Pflüger's Archiv does. To enable it to do this, however, it will need the subscriptions of all who are interested in its success. The subscriptions may be sent to Dr. Porter.

Prof. Baur's Observations on the Origin of the Galapagos Islands, begun in the August number, will continue in October.

RECENT LITERATURE.

Tarr's Elementary Geology.[1]—A small octavo volume intended by the author as a text-book for use in secondary schools. The main facts of structural and dynamic geology are given in a graphic, concise way that will best impress a young student. Stratigraphic geology is somewhat curtailed in treatment in accordance with the author's views as to the need of the average high school student. We notice in the time-scale that Pleistocene is adopted instead of the older Quaternary and Eocene and Neocene used in place of Tertiary.

The illustrations are numerous, many of them being original. They comprise 25 page plates and 485 reproductions from photographs and diagrams in the text.

Mr. Tarr is to be congratulated upon having chosen judiciously from a mass of material the facts necessary to a good foundation for further study of the history of the earth.

U. S. Commission of Fish and Fisheries.[2]—The report of

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[1] Elementary Geology. By R. S. Tarr. New York, 1897. 8vo, MacMillan & Co., $1.40.

[2] U. S. Commission of Fish and Fisheries, Pt. XXI. Report of the Commissioner for the year ending June 30, 1895. Washington, 1896.